

DD/R-081-63

17 January 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR: Executive Director

SUBJECT: CIA Relationships with the Academic Community

REFERENCE: Your Memorandum, Same Subject, Dated  
17 December 1962, ER-62-8584/1

1. By way of general comments on Mr. Cline's memorandum of 20 November 1962, we share Mr. Cline's belief that something can and should be done to enhance our public image, particularly as it would apply to our ability to attract and develop, on a continuing basis, expertise and intellectual excellence which are so vital to our mission. Since I believe that the matter of image and relationship with the public lies at the basis of all of Mr. Cline's comments, I shall comment somewhat at length on the subject of image and then make specific comments relative to his other points in Paragraph 3.

2. The Image of CIA

a. I am sure that most of us have experienced many times the inaccurate and inadequate concept of CIA in the public mind. This is particularly frustrating and disturbing to many Agency components in the execution of their necessary duties. Further, I share the feeling that is at least implicit in Mr. Cline's Point b. that it may not be necessary for this type of image to exist, and that something could possibly be done about it within the bounds of security and other necessary considerations. I think it may well be an appropriate time in the Agency's history to examine seriously and critically ways and means of purposely developing a public image to the benefit of CIA. It is entirely possible that we may now be able to take steps which could not have been acceptable some years earlier. For example, the Agency has always been most careful to avoid any publicity favorable as well as unfavorable pertaining to its personnel or its activities. This simple fact keeps the organization an unknown quantity

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and perhaps even worse a concept in the public mind generated out of news stories which were never confirmed or denied and which generally at best have been incomplete or distorted. Perhaps it may now be possible to fill at least some of this void with valid information. Is it possible for instance to now release, officially, intelligence stories from the past which would show the Agency in a true and favorable light and which are now old enough that individuals or sources could be disguised and not be jeopardized? This technique has been used many times by military agencies, police, FBI, etc. Further, could we expand and extend the release of studies and reports to the academic world identifying the Agency as the source?

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Is there any real reason why CIA should not get credit for this service particularly in instances where highly expert analysts may have made a contribution difficult to parallel outside the Agency? It has been my impression that our policy has been fairly generous in allowing our personnel to publish as long as they were not identified with the Agency and it could be determined that classified materials were not contained. Is it necessary in all cases that the author not be identified with CIA? Similarly, the Agency could make an interesting contribution to universities or other professional groups by furnishing experts to lecture on various aspects of foreign science, economics, etc., or even on subjects not necessarily flavored by intelligence or foreign connotations. It would in turn be a contribution to CIA if such lecturers could be identified as CIA. In this fashion we could establish CIA as having some of the country's outstanding experts in fields of international economics, science, etc., within such professional circles. Even though it is immediately apparent that many people kept under complete or partial cover could not be so exposed, there must nevertheless be a considerable number that we can reasonably expect will never be handicapped by their association being professionally known. Thus, I believe that a program of releasing documentaries, providing lecturers, presenting papers before professional societies, publishing in professional journals by personnel openly identified with CIA could all greatly enhance our professional

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stature, ability to attract employees, consultants and general public respect. If such steps can be made it also follows that we should be able to advertise openly in professional journals and perhaps sponsor feature articles in professional literature describing some of the academic work of the Agency and the types of personnel desired by the Agency. Such steps as these would unquestionably make the overt side of the Agency more overt. It does not seem likely that the covert side would be jeopardized, and in fact may be aided by diverting attention to the overt side of the Agency.

b. By way of comment on Mr. Cline's other specific comments, I share the sentiment expressed in S.b. Not only is it basically essential that meaningful, intelligent, conversation be held with prospective applicants, it is doubtful that there is really any valid reason why this cannot be done within the bounds of good, common sense security. I think it is entirely probable that more vagueness and mystery has shrouded many interviews than was necessary. The net result of such techniques has been, I suspect, of no real service to security and has simply added in the distortion and erosion of the CIA image. This person to person contact may be one of the most important image builders.

c. I think there is undoubtedly merit in the idea of contact between the senior professional specialists and prospective candidates, and certainly such effort will at least be a useful adjunct to "routine personnel handling". It is my impression there has already been considerable practice of this suggestion. In general, such professional contacts or recruiting efforts by the specialized offices have been in conjunction with the Office of Personnel. It is my own impression that this approach could be strengthened and improved both as practiced by the hiring office and the Office of Personnel. There can be no doubt, however, of the validity of Mr. Cline's point that in the attraction of highly skilled professionals such as the need in his own component and similarly in the DD/R, "routine" handling is not sufficient. I believe that time and attention by the operating officials working closely with the Office of Personnel in order to build a permanent and continuing mechanism which can foster

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and maintain mutual understanding is necessary. As an added aid in getting highly qualified personnel in the hard-to-get categories it may be appropriate or even necessary that the Offices of Security, Personnel and Medical Staff give immediate and top priority to all such cases. In view of the fact that abundant evidence is available certifying to the much greater demand than there is supply in the field of science and engineering, we have an entirely different recruitment problem than in other fields where job alternatives are not so common.

d. This item included in Paragraph 2.



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